

# North Carolina Air National Guard

## TGIF News

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(The Guard is Family)



### American Legion's 15,000 Posts Support Military Families

by Ken Swarner

With 15,000 posts around the country, help is only a phone call away. Since the war on terrorism started, the American Legion has come to the rescue of thousands of military families. Legionnaires have mowed lawns,

babysat, fixed leaky faucets – whatever it takes to help those families who have a military family member deployed. "Any emergency, we want to help," said Joe March, a spokesperson at the Legion's national office.

The National Family Support Network, a free service, was first introduced during the first Gulf War. It was reactivated after the September 11 terrorist attacks and will remain activated until the war on terrorism is over, March said. Military families can call 1-800-504-4098, and an operator will put them in touch with the American Legion post nearest their home. "With 15,000 posts, I'm pretty sure we have someone to help everyone," March said.

Legion posts are involved because members know what it's like to go to war and leave family members behind. "We've been there, done that," March said. Clint Thompson, commander of Post 380 in Charlotte, North Carolina, agreed. "We know what it's like to deploy and leave our families behind," Thompson said.

For that, Thompson is happy to return the favor others did for his family when he was gone. Post 380 has helped military families with rent and phone bills and to get in touch with loved ones deployed overseas. Thompson said his post sits close to both a National Guard and Marine Reserve center. "Most the families are doing well, but some have problems getting in touch with loved ones," Thompson added. His group has facilitated mail and phone calls through the various chains of command.

John Napper, a district commander in northern North Carolina, has also been busy with the program. He and his wife have tried to provide information to military

families. "We answer legal questions and anything else we can do," Napper said. He said the reactions have been positive. "Families are a little in shock that we would do all of this for them," Napper added.

On a similar note, the one million members of the Legion's Ladies Auxiliary also have firsthand experience with deployments – from the other end – being left behind. Legion ladies also provide assistance to families. In some cases, they just offer a shoulder to cry on. "Our Auxiliary has offered a lot of support over the phone to military wives – it's been a great resource," March added.

The Legion hasn't stopped there. "We also brought back the Blue Star Service Banners," March said. These are cloth banners with one to five stars that hang in the front windows of homes. Each star represents a family member deployed to war. Legion posts have offered the banners free or at cost. Banners can also be downloaded from the Legion's website, [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

Also on the website are links to other places where people can volunteer to support the troops, links to donation programs, a suggested prayer for the troops, and much more. March said Legion posts have also opened their doors to military support groups, providing space for families to gather and discuss issues.

The American Legion supports military families, but also hopes the warriors will appreciate what they do for their families. "The best benefit of the American Legion is a camaraderie with your brothers in arms," March said. He said those who return from war may want to consider being a part of the organization. Thompson said those who joined after the first Gulf War have been invaluable for the Family Support Network this time around. "They really know what the troops and families are going through," Thompson explained.

Benefits of joining the Legion include discounts at various stores, access to benefit information and support, and leadership opportunities. The Legion also provides an eyewear program that discounts glasses by 60 percent. "That benefit alone recoups the cost of membership in the Legion," March said.

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## June 14th 2003, National Flag Day

Taken from The National Flag Foundation, Inc. and "Til Wheels are Up"

This year, National Flag Day is a very special day. As stated by the National Flag Day Foundation, Inc., at their 23rd Annual National Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance, "The red, white, and blue of the American Flag reflect the honor, decency, and courage of the American Spirit. It is the breath of that spirit that brings the Stars and Stripes to life, and wherever they unfurl, there does freedom live."

The first flags adopted by our colonial forefathers were symbolic of their struggles with the wilderness of a new land. Beavers, pine trees, rattlesnakes, anchors, and various like insignia with mottoes such as "Hope," "Liberty," "Appeal to Heaven," or "Don't Tread on Me" were affixed to the different banners of Colonial America.

The first flag of the colonists to have any resemblance to the present Stars and Stripes was the Grand Union Flag, sometimes referred to as the "Congress Colors." It consisted of thirteen stripes, alternately red and white, representing the Thirteen Colonies, with a blue field in the upper left-hand corner bearing the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, signifying union with the mother country. This banner was first flown by the ships of the Colonial Fleet in the Delaware River in December 1775.

Continental Congress passed a resolution that established the Stars and Stripes on 14 June 1777, but did not specify the arrangement of the thirteen stars on the blue union, except to say that they should represent a new constellation. Consequently, some had stars in a circle, some in rows, some scattered on the blue field without any apparent design.

The Resolution of 14 June 1777 establishing the Stars and Stripes has an interesting history. After the Declaration of Independence, colonial vessels were putting to sea to hamper enemy communications and prey on British commerce. Many of them flew the flags of the particular colonies to which they belonged. It was necessary to provide an authorized national flag under which they could sail, for England considered armed vessels without such a flag as pirate ships and hanged their crews when they captured them. So the Marine Committee of the Second Continental Congress presented the Resolution, which was on the subject of the Navy.

General Washington, when the Star-Spangled Banner was first flown by the Continental Army, is reputed to have described its symbolism as follows: "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

Realizing that the flag would become unwieldy with a stripe for each new State, Captain Samuel C. Reid, USN, suggested to Congress that the stripes remain thirteen in number to represent the Thirteen Colonies, and that a star be added to the blue field for each new State coming into the Union. A law of 4 April 1818 that resulted requires that a star be added for each new State on the 4th of July after its admission but that the thirteen stripes remain unchanged.

There is no fixed order for numbering the stars in the flag, nor are stars assigned to particular States. The stars represent the States collectively, not individually, and no particular star may be designated as representative of any particular State.

From A Proclamation from the President of the United States, Flag Day and National Flag Week 2002, President George W. Bush stated, *"The American flag is a beacon of hope, a symbol of enduring freedom, and an emblem of unity. Many have given their lives in its defense, and countless men and women have worked to ensure that Old Glory continues to stand for the ideals of freedom, justice, and equal opportunity for all. Our flag symbolizes the purpose and resolve of our Nation, first expressed by our Founders who triumphed against great odds to establish this country. Today, as we face the challenges of a new era, our flag reminds us that freedom will prevail over oppression and that good will overcome evil" "On Flag Day, we remember the struggles and successes for which our flag stands. And we look to the flag as an everlasting symbol of our commitment to a world of peace, a Nation of principle, and a people of unity".*

"I pledge

allegiance

to the Flag

of the

United States

of America

and to the

Republic

for which it

stands,

one nation

under God,

indivisible,

with liberty

and justice

for all."

The **flag folding ceremony** described by the Uniformed Services is a dramatic and uplifting way to honor the flag on special days. The flag folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our country was originally founded. The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing the states our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted when draped as a pall on a casket of a veteran who has served our country honorably in uniform. ("Til Wheels are up, 14-17)

The **first** fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The **second** fold is a symbol our belief in the eternal life.

The **third** fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain a peace throughout the world.

The **fourth** fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.

The **fifth** fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The **sixth** fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The **seventh** fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The **eighth** fold is a tribute to the one who entered in to the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom if flies on mother's day.

The **ninth** fold is a tribute to womenhood; for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who made this country great have been molded.

The **tenth** fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.

The **eleventh** fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob.

The **twelfth** fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, **"In God we Trust."**

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedom we enjoy today.

The National Flag Day Foundation, chartered December 1982, as a non-profit organization. Its vision is to educate all Americans of the unifying and patriotic significance of Flag Day and of the annual National Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Foundation's specific mission is to encourage all Americans to observe National Flag Day and participate in the annual National Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance through patriotic education and public awareness programs. ([www.flagday.org](http://www.flagday.org))

In a 1917  
Flag Day message,

President Wilson  
said:

*"This flag,  
which we honor  
and  
under which we  
serve,  
is the emblem of  
our unity,  
our power,  
our thought  
and purpose  
as a nation.  
It has no other  
character  
than that  
which we give it  
from generation to  
generation.  
The choices are ours.  
It floats in  
majestic silence  
above the hosts  
that execute  
those choices,  
whether in peace  
or in war.  
And yet,  
though silent,  
it speaks to us -  
  
speaks to us  
of the past,  
or the  
men  
and women  
who went before us,  
and of the  
records  
they wrote  
upon it."*

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**TRICARE DENTAL**  
1-888-622-2256 (Enrollment)  
1-800-866-8499 (Information)

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NORTH EAST**  
1-888-999-5195

**REGION 2  
MID - ATLANTIC**  
1-800-931-9501

**REGION 3  
SOUTHEAST**  
1-800-444-5445

**REGION 4  
GULF SOUTH**  
1-800-444-5445

**REGION 5  
HEARTLAND**  
1-800-941-4501

**REGION 6  
SOUTHWEST**  
1-800-406-2832

**REGION 7/8  
CENTRAL**  
1-888-874-9378

**REGION 9  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**  
1-800-242-6788

**REGION 10  
GOLDEN GATE**  
1-800-242-6788

**REGION 11  
NORTHWEST**  
1-800-404-2042

**ALASKA & HAWAII**  
1-800-242-6788

## TRICARE HELP E-MAIL SERVICE (THEMS) NEWSLETTER MAY 2003

### Volume 2, Issue 5

**TRICARE\_help@amedd.army.mil, "Helping to Understand"**

This newsletter is a publication of the TRICARE Help E-mail Service, operated by the U.S. Army Medical Command in San Antonio, Texas.

What is THEMS? THEMS is a free e-mail service that provides timely responses to TRICARE questions. Clinical issues should be referred to your primary care provider. The e-mail address is: TRICARE\_help@amedd.army.mil

#### Portability Transfer

TRICARE Prime enrollees retain Prime coverage when they move or travel within the same TRICARE region, or when they move or travel to a different TRICARE region. The regional contractor will continue to provide coverage, subject to normal referral and authorization rules, until the beneficiary transfers enrollment to the contractor for the new location.

If the beneficiary relocates to a Prime service area within the same region, there is no change of contractor. All the beneficiary has to do is update the enrollment records with the new address and select a new primary care manager (PCM). This can either be done by visiting the servicing TRICARE Service Center (TSC) or by mail, using the change request form for the region of enrollment. Since there is no change of region, there is no change in the enrollment payment process.

If the enrollee is relocating to a Prime service area in a different TRICARE region, contacting the contractor for the new region and completing the required paperwork for enrollment in that region will start the transfer process. The transfer is effective on the day the gaining contractor receives the signed enrollment application agreeing to a transfer of enrollment to the new region, and the patient should contact the new PCM for any required care and follow the referral and authorization rules for the new region. If the beneficiary relocates to an area where Prime is not available, he/she should disenroll and use either TRICARE Standard or Extra.

Please keep in mind, it may take up to 16 working days for the transfer enrollment to be reflected in the gaining region. During this time, it is important for the beneficiaries to understand their current enrollment status and follow the rules for treatment in the new region. We suggest beneficiaries keep a copy of the completed transfer paperwork, in case the new PCM has a question about the status of the newly transferred

enrollee.

To facilitate the smooth transfer between regions, it is important for Prime-enrolled retirees and their families to keep their enrollment fees up-to-date. Thirty days before enrollment fees are due, the regional TRICARE contractor will contact the responsible individual to make the next installment or annual payment. If payment is not received by the end of the 30-day grace period, the family will be disenrolled retroactive to the date that payment was due. Therefore, it is important that Prime enrollees in the process of moving make sure that payments for enrollment fees are current. If the losing region disenrolls the beneficiaries while they are in the process of moving, claims will process using deductibles and cost shares associated with TRICARE Standard. Also, Prime enrollees who are disenrolled for failure to pay enrollment fees in a timely manner may be locked out of Prime enrollment for 1 year.

Once the gaining region receives a request for portability transfer, that region will coordinate with the losing region to update records pertaining to enrollment fees and accumulation of catastrophic cap information. Future enrollment fees will then be invoiced and paid through the gaining region.

Prior to relocating, the Prime enrollee should discuss portability transfer procedures with personnel at the

TSC. They can help with any questions or facilitate disenrollment if that is your choice.

If you have a problem or a question about the transfer process, it is important to discuss your concerns. One source of help is the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator located at each military

treatment facility. Another useful source is the TRICARE Help E-Mail Service (THEMS). You can reach THEMS by sending an e-mail to TRICARE\_help@amedd.army.mil

Copies of this newsletter and earlier issues are available online 24/7 in MS Word and text format at <http://thems:newsletter@139.161.156.101/> (Indexes of previous issues are also available at above site in MS Word and text format)



## Training Resources

Free Handbooks for US Military at <http://www.militaryhandbooks.com>

Another site from the United States Marine Corps  
From COL Scott at OSD-RA:

Another resource for R & R training and information. Special thanks to Kathleen M. Facon, Children, Youth and Teen Program Specialist, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, Cathy Reynolds, MCFTB Program Specialist, and my assistant Lt Col Ian Ferguson for bringing this to our attention!  
<http://www.felines2000.org/return/reunion.htm>



In appreciation of those who have served, educational institutions are stepping forward with [special opportunities for veterans](#) that make getting or completing a degree easier than ever.

Get free information from military-friendly schools offering:

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Use the valuable education benefits you've earned. [Find military-friendly schools today](#). There is no cost or obligation for this Military.com member service.



## Family Readiness Air Guard Expanded Executive Council

Fisk Outwater - Chairman  
Kathleen Flaherty  
Terry Henderson  
Janice Richardson  
Deborah Dunlap - Recognition Committee  
Martha Pasour - Youth Committee  
Sarah Spivey - Youth Committee

### Family Readiness office telephone numbers

" 1-800-354-6943 Ext. 4949

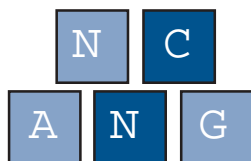
" Cell Phone: 980-721-4019

The fastest way to get in touch with FR is now through the cell phone or pager, someone will answer or get back in touch with you as quickly as possible

### Emergency contact calls:

" Pager: 1-800-250-4181

*Uniting Our Air Guard  
One Family at a Time*



**Family Readiness**  
5225 Morris Field Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28208

Phone: 1-800-354-6943 Ext 4949  
Cell Phone: 980-721-4019

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
[www.ncchar.ang.af.mil](http://www.ncchar.ang.af.mil)

## Family Readiness

### Charter

Develop a program to provide information, on-going education, and assistance to families, members, and leadership aimed at preparing military members and their families for National Guard Military Life

### Mission

Educate, Support, Assist, Communicate, Collaborate, and Sustain